UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General calls on world leaders assembled in Moscow to continue support for United Nations.

+ UNPROFOR says Bosnian Serbs are tightening their grip on Sarajevo; situation in Croatia remains tense in all Sectors.

+ 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference further defers decision on extension of Treaty until Thursday; Democratic People's Republic of Korea says it will not participate in adopting any decision.

+ Special Representative for Cyprus to meet with Cypriot leaders and Greek and Turkish officials during visit to region next week.

+ Eight United Nations staff members abducted in Sudan on Sunday released; captors continue to hold Philippine national.

+ International Narcotics Control Board elects Oskar Schroeder of Germany as its President as fifty-eighth session continues.

+ United Nations agencies and programmes to observe second International Day of Families on 15 May.

+ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to hold eighteenth session in Beirut from 22 to 25 May.

+ United Nations Information Centre in Moscow publishes Russian language volume based on blue book on nuclear non-proliferation.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today concluded his visit to Moscow and departed for Paris. Prior to his departure, the Secretary-General met with United Nations staff at the United Nations Information Centre in the Russian capital. He was also presented with a special medal by the Russian Academy of Sciences, in recognition of the Organization's work for world peace and cooperation.

For information media—not an official record

Yesterday evening, the Secretary-general attended a State reception hosted by the President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War. A minute of silence was observed in memory of those who perished in the War.

During the dinner, statements were made by President Yeltsin; President Francois Mitterrand of France; Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany; Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom; President Bill Clinton of the United States; and the Secretary-General. In his statement, Mr. Boutros-Ghali called on the leaders assembled in Moscow to continue to support the great enterprise of building a world of peace and cooperation. He expressed the hope that their legacy would be a strong United Nations.

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The situation in Croatia was tense in all Sectors today, according to a United Nations spokesman. He expressed particular concern regarding Sector South, where Croatian troops maintained their presence around United Nations observations posts. Mines were laid around one post, and attempts to resupply it were unsuccessful. A Czech peace-keeper was wounded in the arm by firing in the area yesterday.

Meanwhile, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has sent two teams of human rights monitors to Sector West. The monitors are working jointly with the United Nations Civil Affairs Department and civilian police in investigating the human rights situation in the Sector. The United Nations has been pressing for monitoring of detention centres there, and of the release of Serbian detainees.

The spokesman said that the Bosnian Serbs appeared to be tightening their grip on Sarajevo. Eight shells were fired into the city today, and a French armoured personnel carrier was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade. There were also reports of shooting on Mount Igman and in the Butmir area. Yesterday, the Bosnian Serbs threatened to target any vehicles, other than United Nations and non-governmental organization vehicles, on the Dobrinja route to Sarajevo airport.

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The 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has further deferred its decision on the extension of the Treaty until Thursday. Meanwhile, Egypt and several other Arab countries have proposed a draft resolution calling upon Israel to accede without delay to the NPT and to place all its nuclear activities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. The draft also calls upon all States in the region to take practical steps towards the establishment of a verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

In another development, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has said it will not participate in adopting decisions or documents at the

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Conference. In a letter to the President of the Conference dated 9 May, the Democratic People's Republic said that certain countries were "using the Conference" against it, and that the nuclear issue of the Korean peninsula had been unreasonably represented.

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The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cyprus, Joe Clark, will visit the region during the week of 15 May, a United Nations spokesman said today. The visit is being undertaken within the framework of the Secretary-General's mission of good offices on Cyprus.

Mr. Clark will confer with officials of the Greek and Turkish Governments, and with leaders of the two communities in Cyprus, with a view to facilitating progress on the basis of possibilities that have emerged in recent months. He will be accompanied by the Deputy Special Representative for Cyprus, Gustave Feissel.

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All but one of nine United Nations staff members abducted in Sudan on Sunday have been released, a spokesman for the Organization announced today. He said negotiations were underway for the release of the remaining staff member, a national of the Philippines. The nine -- two international and two local staff members of the World Food Programme (WFP), as well as five local staff members of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) -- were working for Operation Lifeline Sudan when they were abducted. The 13-man crew of a barge transporting humanitarian goods was also held in the incident.

The United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Peter Hansen, had called for the immediate release of all those abducted. He reiterated that the safety and security of humanitarian workers must be respected under all circumstances and by all parties. Failure to do so could only result in greater suffering for those affected by emergencies, such as the one in Sudan, he said.

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The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) has elected Oskar Schroeder of Germany as its President, as it continues its fifty-eighth session in Vienna. Mr. Schroeder served as President of the 13-member independent international treaty body in 1991 and 1992.

The main focus of the current session is identifying weaknesses in the international drug control system. The Board is also reviewing how governments have been living up to their obligations under the three pillars of the system -- the 1961 Convention on Narcotic Drugs; the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances; and the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. In view of the

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nature of its deliberations, the Board's sessions are confidential.

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United Nations agencies and programmes are planning a wide range of cultural and informational activities for the observance of the second International Day of Families on 15 May. The Day was designated by the General Assembly in 1993 in order to focus local, national and international attention on the situation of families around the world.

The suggested theme for this year's celebration is "Tolerance Begins in the Family", in view of the observance of 1995 as United Nations Year for Tolerance.

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The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) will hold its eighteenth session in Beirut from 22 to 25 May. The Commission will discuss regional cooperation, the impact of a single European market on its members, and other issues.

The session will bring together government ministers from the Commission's 13 members -- Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. It will be divided into two segments: the technical segment, on 22 and 23 May, and the ministerial segment, on 24 and 25ÑMay.

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The United Nations Information Centre in Moscow has published a Russian language volume based on the recently issued "blue book" entitled "The United Nations and Nuclear Non-Proliferation". The publication coincides with the crucial 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The volume includes a full translation of the Secretary-General's inaugural address to the NPT Conference on 17 April. The Treaty is the cornerstone of efforts by the international community to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons while ensuring that the benefits of nuclear technology are available for peaceful purposes.

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Correction The penultimate paragraph of the Daily Highlights of 9 May should have read as follows:

As of 30 April, Member States owed the United Nations almost $3 billion, according to the latest update on the Organization's financial situation. Of that amount, $1.03 billion was for assessments for the regular budget and $1.93 was for peace-keeping operations.